

XII.—*Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club.*

Nos. XX. & XXI.

No. XX. (Oct. 31st, 1894.)

THE nineteenth meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 24th of October, 1894.

Chairman: HENRY SEEBOHM.

Members present:—W. E. DE WINTON, E. HARGITT, A. P. LOYD, F. MENTEITH OGILVIE, W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT, DIGBY PIGOTT, C.B., COUNT SALVADORI, HENRY SEEBOHM, R. BOWDLER SHARPE, G. E. SHELLEY, W. B. TEGETMEIER, H. T. WHARTON, JOHNSON WILKINSON, C. A. WRIGHT.

Visitors: C. E. FAGAN, C. B. RICKETT.

The CHAIRMAN announced that, owing to domestic bereavement, Dr. Sclater was unable to attend the Meeting, and that his Annual Address to the B.O.C. would be postponed to the next Meeting, in November.

COUNT SALVADORI made some remarks on the Ducks of the genera *Anas* and *Nyroca*, the following being apparently new to science:—

ANAS OUSTALETI, sp. n.

Similis *A. superciliosæ*, sed speculo alari cæruleo-purpureo paullum viridi nitente, tæniâ albâ ante-speculari distinguenda.

Hab. in insulis Mariannis. Typus in Museo Parisiensi.

NYROCA INNOTATA, sp. n.

Similis *N. leucophthalmæ*, sed capitis, colli, pectorisque colore castaneo valdè saturiore: torque collari fusco nullo, et maculâ mentali albâ deficiente, distinguenda.

Hab. in insulâ Madagascar dictâ. Typus in Museo Britannico.

Mr. W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT exhibited a series of specimens of the birds collected by Mr. John Whitehead in the mountains of Northern Luzon. Two species appeared to be undescribed:—

ORIOIUS ISABELLÆ, sp. n.

♀. Similis *O. albilori*, sed major, loris mentoque flavis, et rostro brunnescenti-nigro distinguendus. Long. tot. 8·8 poll., alæ 4·4, caudæ 3·6 (in *O. albilori* 2·9).

ZOSTERORNIS STRIATUS, sp. n.

Similis *Z. whiteheadi*, sed gastræo toto nigro distincte striolato, sicut in genere '*Mixornis*' dicto, distinguenda. Long. tot. 5·5 poll., alæ 2·4, caudæ 2·05.

Dr. R. BOWDLER SHARPE exhibited the type of *Micropus nehrkorni*, W. Blasius (J. f. O. 1890, p. 147), which had been sent by Herr Nehr Korn to Dr. Sclater for identification (cf. Ibis, 1894, p. 569). Dr. Sharpe had omitted this species from the list of species of *Micropus* given by him in 'The Ibis' for 1894, p. 422, and was much obliged to Herr Nehr Korn for sending the specimen to England.

On examination *Micropus nehrkorni* proved to be not a Bulbul, but a representative species in Mindanao of *Melaniparus semilarvatus*, Salvad., of Luzon. It must therefore be known as *Melaniparus nehrkorni* (W. Blasius). The resemblance to *Micropus melanoleucus* was very striking, but the longer bill, more prominent rictal bristles, ovate nostril, and feebler feet distinguished the *Micropus*, while the rounded nostril, covered with feathers, and the powerful feet identified *Melaniparus* as a member of the family Paridæ, though aberrant in its general appearance. *M. nehrkorni* differed from *M. semilarvatus* in its narrower white frontal band, white speculum at the base of the primaries, and white under wing-coverts and axillaries.

Mr. SEEBOHM exhibited specimens of *Merula thomassoni* from the mountains of Northern Luzon (cf. Bull. B. O. C. iii. p. li), and pointed out the close affinity of the species to *M. papuensis*, De Vis, from the mountains of S.E. New Guinea.

Dr. BOWDLER SHARPE made some remarks on the species of Birds of Paradise of the genus *Diphyllodes*, of which he recognized the following :—

1. *D. magnifica* (Penn.). N.W. New Guinea (Sorong ; Salawati).
2. *D. seleucides*, Less. N.W. New Guinea (Arfak Mts.).
3. *D. chrysoptera*, Gould (*D. jobiensis*, Meyer).
4. *D. septentrionalis*, Meyer. Finisterre Mts.
5. *D. hunsteini*, Meyer. Astrolabe Mts.

The Arfak bird, of which he had recently seen upwards of one hundred examples, was an intermediate form between the pale ochre-winged *D. magnifica* and the golden-winged *D. chrysoptera*. *D. septentrionalis* was barely separable from *D. hunsteini*, but had the deep crimson mantle-patch of *D. chrysoptera*, while the birds from S.E. New Guinea had the mantle-patch of a lighter crimson. *D. hunsteini*, Meyer, with a richer golden-orange tint on the wings, was believed by Dr. Sharpe to be merely a very old and brightly coloured plumage of the ordinary Golden-winged Bird of Paradise from the mountain-ranges of S.E. New Guinea. The large series of skins of *D. seleucides* from the Arfak Mountains showed the increasing richness in coloration of these golden-winged species of *Diphyllodes*, in proportion to their age.

Dr. SHARPE also pointed out that the species of Plover of the genus *Defilippia* from Nyasa Land and the Zambesi region was distinct from *Defilippia crassirostris* of Equatorial Africa. He separated it as

DEFILIPPIA BURROWSII, sp. n.

Similis *D. crassirostri*, sed secundariis purè albis, et capitis nigredine magis extenso, faciliè distinguenda.

Hab. in terrâ Nyasensi.

Dr. SHARPE also made some remarks on the Grebes of the genus *Tachybates*, and pointed out that four distinct species had been confounded under the heading of *T. minor*. Of these the African bird had received the "nomen nudum" of *Podiceps capensis* from Bonaparte, which Dr. Sharpe proposed to adopt.

TACHYBAPTES CAPENSIS, sp. n.

Similis *T. minori*, sed abdomine sericeo-albo, minimè nigro, et colli lateralis colore castaneo usque ad oculum posticum extenso faciliè distinguendus.

Hab. in regione Ethiopicâ totâ.

TACHYBAPTES ALBIPENNIS, sp. n.

Similis *T. minori*, sed colli lateralis colore castaneo usque ad oculum posticum extenso, secundariis purè albis, rachidibusque earum quoque albis, distinguendus.

Hab. in subregione Indicâ peninsulari.

Mr. TEGETMEIER exhibited a curious grey variety of the Common Partridge (*Perdix perdix*) and some feathers of an Ostrich (sp. inc.), at present living in the Zoological Society's Gardens.

No. XXI. (Nov. 30th, 1894.)

THE twentieth meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 21st of November, 1894.

Chairman : P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S.

Members present :—E. BIDWELL, F. E. BLAAUW, P. CROWLEY, W. E. DE WINTON, Major A. P. LOYD, Dr. ST. G. MIVART, F.R.S., E. NEALE, F. MENTEITH OGILVIE, W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT, E. C. PEARSON, J. J. PEARSON, T. DIGBY PIGOTT, C.B., HOWARD SAUNDERS (*Treasurer*), W. L. SCLATER, HENRY SEEBOHM, R. BOWDLER SHARPE (*Editor*), W. B. TEGETMEIER, AUBYN TREVOR-BATTYE, H. T. WHARTON, JOHNSON WILKINSON, C. A. WRIGHT.

Visitors : E. A. S. ELLIOT, C. E. FAGAN, H. H. JOHNSTON, C.B., R. I. POCOCK, C. B. RICKETT.

On the motion of Dr. R. BOWDLER SHARPE, it was unanimously Resolved :

“ That the best thanks of the B. O. C. be offered to Mr. J. P. GASSIOT, F.Z.S., for his handsome contribution

of £25 towards the expenses of the production of Vol. II. of the 'Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club,' and that a complete copy of the three volumes of the 'Bulletin' be presented to him."

The Chairman read the following Address to the Club :—

MY remarks on opening the Third Session of the B. O. C. have been unavoidably postponed until the present Meeting ; but I now propose to address to you a few words on some of the recent events in Ornithology.

Section I. NEW DISCOVERIES.

More than forty years ago, as I well recollect, my former friend and master in Ornithology, Hugh Strickland, used to complain how hard it was to find a bird really new to Science. Strickland had no idea of the enormous number of new species and new forms, some of them of the most extraordinary character, which would be constantly discovered and described year by year after that period. At the present epoch it must be allowed that, in the two great Northern Regions of the earth's surface, there remains little more to be done in the way of discovery of new species. But in the Oriental, Australian, Ethiopian, and Neotropical Regions, as fast as new localities are visited, new forms of avian life still continue to present themselves. For example, Mr. Whitehead's researches in the highlands of the Philippines, and Mr. Everett's labours in the Natuna Islands alike show that the ornithological riches of the Oriental Region are by no means exhausted. In Australia proper, perhaps, little more in the way of novelty is to be expected, but in the Papuan Subregion the already rich Ornis is still receiving most remarkable additions as new areas are explored. Within the past few months two new forms of Paradise-birds, both referable to new genera*, besides many other very interesting new species, have come to light ; and I

* *Loria*, Salvad. (*Ibis*, 1894, p. 564), and *Lamprothorax*, Meyer, *Abhandl. k. zool. Mus. Dresd.* iv. no. 2.

am told by Mr. De Vis that Sir William Macgregor has discovered a third new Paradise-bird.

As regards Africa, I need only call attention to the collections made under the directions of Mr. H. H. Johnston, C.B., by Mr. Alexander Whyte in Nyasa-land, and described in 'The Ibis' by Capt. Shelley. Our German fellow-workers are also constantly engaged in characterizing new species from both the Eastern and the Western German territories in Tropical Africa. Passing across the Atlantic to South America we might well suppose that the stream of novelties which has flowed from the Neotropical Region abundantly for so many years, was now likely to stop. But the collection recently received by Mr. Salvin from Mr. Baron shows that even in Peru, which has been so fully explored by the collectors of Warsaw, this is not the case. Mr. Salvin tells me that Mr. Baron's recent collection (of which he will shortly write in 'Novitates Zoologicæ') contains examples of no fewer than 14 new species. Mr. Garlepp's collections from Bolivia, which are submitted to the experienced scrutiny of Graf von Berlepsch, also often comprise examples of new and remarkable species. There is likewise still much to be done in Tucuman and in the adjoining northern provinces of Argentina, whence Herr Paul Neumann has lately sent a most interesting series of specimens to the Berlin Museum (*cf.* Bull. B. O. C. iii. p. xlv). It is plain, therefore, that we may still look forward for many years to the great pleasure of discovering, describing, and figuring new species in 'The Ibis' and in our 'Bulletin.'

SECTION II. ORNITHOLOGICAL WORKS IN PROGRESS AND PROMISED.

As regards Ornithological books, there has seldom, if ever, I think, been a time when so many new ones have been in progress and in preparation. For England alone, besides Lord Lilford's 'Coloured Figures of British Birds,' we have Dr. Sharpe's 'Handbook' in the 'Naturalist's Library,' and Wyatt's 'British Birds'; and Mr. Dresser has

now announced the speedy appearance of his long promised Supplement to the 'Birds of Europe.' Two important works, which, however, are making somewhat slower progress — Menzbier's 'Ornithologie du Turkestan' and Pleske's 'Ornithographia Rossica' — are likewise being issued in Russia. To illustrate the Ornis, until recently so little known, of the Hawaiian archipelago, we have two splendidly illustrated works both approaching completion; I need hardly say I refer to Messrs. Wilson and Evans's 'Aves Hawaiienses,' and to Mr. Rothschild's 'Avifauna of Laysan;' both of them productions creditable alike to British science and to British art.

In Monographs the list is perhaps not quite so long as usual, but Dr. Sharpe's 'Paradise-birds,' Mr. Elliot's 'Pittas,' and Mr. Butler's 'Foreign Finches' are alike in process of issue, while Messrs. Sharpe and Wyatt have just brought to a completion their 'Monograph of the Hirundinidæ' and our friend Heer F. E. Blaauw is working hard at an illustrated volume on the Cranes.

I must also not omit to hope for a speedy completion of Messrs. Newton and Gadow's 'Dictionary of Birds,' which, as we must all be aware, when brought to a conclusion, will be of material assistance to the working ornithologist.

Section III. THE GREAT 'CATALOGUE OF BIRDS.'

Since the opening of our last Session the 22nd volume of the 'British Museum Catalogue of Birds,' containing the Game Birds, by Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, and the 23rd volume, containing the Rails, Cranes, and Bustards, by Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, have been published. From the last Parliamentary Report of the British Museum we learn that vol. xxiv. of this important work will contain the Waders, by Dr. Sharpe; vol. xxv. the Gulls and Petrels, by Mr. H. Saunders and Mr. O. Salvin; vol. xxvi. the Divers, Pelicans, Cormorants, and Herons, by Dr. Sharpe; and vol. xxvii. the Geese, Ducks, and the remainder of the Class of Birds, by Count T. Salvadori. Thus, as these naturalists are all, I believe, busily engaged on the compilation of their respective

tasks, we may look forward to the completion of this arduous undertaking within a definite period—say, two or three years from the present time.

The point I wish now to impress upon my brother ornithologists is the great importance and advantage of an index volume to close the series. It has been suggested, I am told, that an index of the genera would be sufficient. An index of genera would be, no doubt, most useful—in fact, I have had such an index of the volumes already issued prepared for my own use; and very handy indeed do I find it. But to this should certainly be added a second index to all the specific names referred to in the twenty-seven volumes of the work. Such an addition would no doubt be somewhat bulky, as I find that the average number of pages taken up with the index of each volume is about 22, which multiplied by 27 would make a volume of nearly 600 pages for the final Index:—

Average number of pages of Index in the 23 published	
volumes of B.M. Cat. Birds	22
Total number of pages of Index in the whole 27 volumes	594

But there can be no doubt that such an index would be of surpassing value to the working ornithologist; and as it might be easily compiled from the indexes already published, the labour of making it would not be serious. Still more complete and still more useful would such an index be, if, after the final volume of the Catalogue, an additional volume were prepared in which all the names of species described since 1874 (when the Catalogue was commenced), and not already recorded in the different volumes, were enrolled, with references to each of them. If this additional volume were also indexed in the 'General Index' the result would be a work of reference to the class of Birds much more complete and of far greater general usefulness than the late G. R. Gray's celebrated 'Hand-list of Birds,' issued some twenty-four years ago, and still used by a large number of ornithologists for purposes of reference.

Section IV. FUTURE EXPLORATIONS SUGGESTED.

In concluding my remarks, I will venture to offer some few words of advice to the Members of the B. O. C., or other ornithologists, who may be seeking for places to which to make future excursions.

Although there is not much left that is new in the Palæartic Region, there is one not far distant part of it of which we as yet know little ornithologically. I allude to the interior of Asiatic Turkey, particularly the Upper Euphrates, where birds are stated by several recent travellers to be abundant. The route to the Persian Gulf, and so up to Bagdad by steamer, is now easy, and the start should be from that quarter in the early spring, when the climate is good. The Euphrates might then be followed to its sources, or so far to the north as convenient, the return home being made by the Mediterranean. An insight would thus be obtained to the ornithology of Mesopotamia, of which as yet nothing, I may say, is known. Many interesting links, no doubt, would be found there between the birds of Persia and those of Syria and Palestine.

An ornithologist who wished to spend his winter in the West Indies could not do better than visit the Island of Margarita, off the coast of Venezuela, which, as a recent traveller informs us, is a healthy place, easy of access, and well provided with birds. It is very desirable to know whether this island, like Curaçao and its satellites (*cf.* Hartert, *Ibis*, 1893, p. 289), possesses any traces of West-Indian forms or is purely Venezuelan in character. In either case it would be well worth a collector's visit.

A more adventurous explorer, who did not fear Africa, might be counselled to visit the Upper Senegal River and the elevated land between that and the Upper Niger, over which the *pax Gallica* is now said to prevail. This country is now of easy access by steamer and railway. Of the birds of Senegal we know nothing since the days of Swainson, excepting the collections made for the Maison Verreaux, and a few scattered details; for Dr. Rochebrune's work ('Faune de la Sénégalie') is universally admitted to be utterly untrustworthy.

Mr. SCLATER exhibited eggs of two species of Macaw, *Ara militaris* and *A. ararauna*, which had been laid in the aviaries of Mr. H. H. Sharland, F.Z.S., at La Fontaine, Tours, the former in June 1890 and the latter in July 1894. They were pure white and of the usual glossy texture of other eggs of the Psittacidæ.

Mr. SCLATER exhibited a skin of Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus wilsoni*), belonging to a collection of skins which had been recently received from the Falkland Islands by the University College Museum, Dundee, and had been kindly submitted to him for examination by Prof. d'Arcy Thompson. This was the first record of the occurrence of this bird in the Falkland Islands, although it had been met with by Durnford in 1876 as far south as the Chupat Valley in Patagonia (Scl. & Huds. Arg. Orn. ii. p. 281), and was also known to occur in Chili.

Mr. J. J. PEARSON exhibited an egg-blowing apparatus, with which he had obtained the best results during his recent visit to Iceland.

Dr. A. B. MEYER, of Dresden, sent the following descriptions of a new Parrot and a new Bird of Paradise, which he intended to describe in detail and to figure elsewhere:—

MICROGLOSSUS SALVADORII, sp. n.

Fœm.? Formâ *M. aterrimi* (Gm.), sed primulaceo-flavus: subtus angustè, suprâ latè nigro fasciatus: alis et caudâ reliquâ plus minusve nigro irroratis: capite cristâque viridi-atris, irregulariter fasciatim pallidissimè flavo signatis et maculatis: maxilla fusca, apice pallido, mandibulâ albescente: pedibus nigris. Long. tot. c. 550 millim., al. 370, caud. 275, crist. 130, rostr. culm. c. 75, max. alt. 40, mand. alt. 36, max. lat. ad bas. 26, mand. lat. ad bas. 36, tars. 20.

Hab. Nova Guinea, in montibus Arfak.

PAROTIA CAROLÆ, sp. n.

Mas. Similis *P. sexpenni* (Bodd.), sed multo minor et ab eâ præterea pileo regioneque periophthalmicâ nitidè saturatè ochraceo-aureis, laterum plumis elongatis, albis, internis castaneis vel nigris, et gulæ plumis piliformibus nitidè

ochraceis, faciliè distinguenda. Long. tot. c. 270 millim., al. 150, caud. 75, capitis rhachid. vexill. 110 (in *P. seapenni* 170), rostr. culm. 19, tars. 46.

Hab. Nova Guinea, in montibus ad flumen Amberno.

Mr. HENRY SEEBOHM exhibited skins of two new species of birds from the interior of Formosa, collected by Mr. Holst. The first was a Tit of the subgenus *Machlolophus*, which he proposed to call

PARUS HOLSTI, sp. n.

Pileo cristato tergoque viridescenti-nigris: macula nuchali alba: gastræo toto lætissimè flavo.

The second was a Rail, which he named

RALLINA FORMOSANA, sp. n.

Similis, ut videtur, *R. sepiario*, Stegn., sed multò minor: pileo dorso concolore (an jr.?), *R. euryzonoidi* jr. similis, sed valdè saturator.

A full description of these species will appear in 'The Ibis.'

Dr. BOWDLER SHARPE stated that he had since discovered that the Plover described by him as *Defilippia burrowsii* (above, p. 138) was the *Vanellus leucopterus* of Reichenow (J. f. O. 1889, p. 265), and the species must therefore be known as *Defilippia leucoptera* (Reichen.).

Mr. A. TREVOR-BATTYE, who had landed in England on the previous evening, received a cordial welcome from his brother members. He gave an interesting account of his explorations in the Island of Kolguev and of his subsequent journey to the Petchora and Archangel.

XIII.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

1. *Bendire on new Birds from Aldabra Island.*

[Description of Nests and Eggs of some new Birds, collected on the Island of Aldabra, North-west of Madagascar, by Dr. W. L. Abbott. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xvii. p. 39.]

Dr. W. L. Abbott, well known for his researches in the